

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 ARAE-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 INRE-00 AGR-05

SNM-02 AID-05 IGA-01 USIE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03

INR-05 L-01 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-02

SS-20 EB-04 DEAE-00 DRC-01 OMB-01 TRSE-00 /069 W

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FM AMEMBASSY LA PAZ

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 4501

AMEMBASSY MEXICO IMMEDIATE

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MEXICO CITY FOR FSO FRANK RAVNDAL, C/O NARCOTICS CONFERENCE

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: SNAR BL

SUBJ: BOLIVIAN MINISTER OF COORDINATION'S FAVORABLE COMMENTS
ON PROPOSED COCA CROP SUBSTITUTION PROJECT

REF: LA PAZ A-186 OCT. 1, 1974

1. BOLIVIAN MINISTER OF COORDINATION, GENERAL LECHIN, TOLD ME OCT 10 THAT HE HAD READ VERY CAREFULLY A PAPER I HAD HANDED HIM EARLIER WHICH EXTRACTED SIGNIFICANT PORTIONS OF THE ATTACHMENT TO REFERENCED AIRGRAM. MINCOORD SAID HE WAS IN ENTIRE AGREEMENT WITH THE APPROACH AND COULD CERTIFY THAT THE BOLIVIAN AUTHORITIES WOULD GIVE US EVERY COOPERATION. HE SAID HE HAD DISCUSSED THE PROJECT WITH KEY MEMBERS OF CONEPLAN (NATIONAL ECONOMIC AND PLANNING COUNCIL) AND, IN GENERAL, WITH THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE. HE UNDERSTANDS THAT THE PROPOSAL IS NOW UNDER CONSIDERATION IN WASHINGTON AND DOES NOT CONSTITUTE A COMMITMENT ON OUR PART. HOWEVER, HE ENCOURAGED ME TO IMMEDIATELY GO INTO DETAILED DISCUSSIONS WITH THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE AS THAT IS THE

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INDICATED COUNTERPART AGENCY FOR THIS PROJECT.

2. MINCOORD INDICATED HIS AWARENESS THAT PILOT PROJECT HAS SOME BUDGETARY IMPLICATIONS AND TOLD ME SPECIFICALLY HIS MINISTRY WILL HAVE THE FINAL SAY ON MINISTERIAL BUDGETARY PRESENTATIONS. THEREFORE, HE SAID HE WAS IN A POSITION TO INFLUENCE FAVORABLY PRESIDENTIAL DECISION ON INCREASED AMOUNTS FOR MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE FOR THIS PROJECT.

3. MINCOORD THEN TOLD ME HE HAD OBTAINED PRESIDENTIAL APPROVAL FOR A SUPPLEMENTARY BUDGET FOR THE MINISTRY OF THE INTERIOR FOR 1974 FISCAL YEAR TO ASSIST IN UPGRADING SALARIES OF THE NARCOTICS UNIT, PROVIDING SOME BONUSES AND IN GENERAL RESPONDING FAVORABLY TO THE INTERIOR MINISTRY'S REQUIREMENTS. HE SAID THAT WHILE THE PRESIDENT WISHES TO KEEP A TIGHT REIN ON BUDGETARY OPERATIONS, HE AND THE BOLIVIAN AUTHORITIES CONSIDER THE FIGHT AGAINST NARCOTICS TRAFFICKING TO BE A HIGH PRIORITY WITH THE BOLIVIAN GOVERNMENT.

4. I SHALL FOLLOW UP MINCOORD SUGGESTIONS ABOUT FURTHER PRELIMINARY CONVERSATION WITH MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE AND WILL REPORT RESULTS. MEANTIME IT WOULD BE VERY HELPFUL TO US TO HAVE AN EARLY AND FAVORABLE REPLY TO OUR AIRGRAM.
STEDMAN

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: DRUG CONTROL, PRODUCTION CONTROLS, INTERGOVERNMENTAL COOPERATION
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 11 OCT 1974
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: elyme
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974LAPAZ06656
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D740290-0304
From: LA PAZ
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t19741053/aaaabsww.tel
Line Count: 84
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION ARA
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: LA PAZ A-186 OCT. 1, 1974
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: elyme
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 09 SEP 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <09 SEP 2002 by boyleja>; APPROVED <05 MAR 2003 by elyme>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: BOLIVIAN MINISTER OF COORDINATION'S FAVORABLE COMMENTS ON PROPOSED COCA CROP SUBSTITUTION PROJECT
TAGS: SNAR, BL, US
To: STATE MEXICO
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005